

Committee: Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy, and Environment Committee
Testimony on: CR-032-2022
Organization: Climate Parents of Prince George's
Person Submitting: Joseph Jakuta, Lead Volunteer
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: June 9, 2022



Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for considering our testimony in support of CR-032-2022 a “Resolution concerning Adoption of the Climate Action Plan.” Climate Parents is a campaign to reduce climate change causing pollution in our schools and our group is active in Prince George’s County. In particular, we worked directly with Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) technical staff and other advocates to develop a Climate Action Plan for PGCPS as part of a Board of Education Focus Workgroup.

CR-032-2022 is a vital resolution for the committee to move forward post haste. We are already seeing first hand effects of climate change in our county, most particularly in flooding events in Cheverly and Fort Washington and an increasing number of high temperature days.

Recently PGCPS developed a Climate Change Action Plan for the school system. The PGCPS plan was specifically written to work in conjunction with the County Council’s Climate Action Plan. Also the County Climate Action Plan is an important piece of puzzle needed to implement state goals and plans in our jurisdiction. It is vital for all of this to work for the County Council’s Climate Action Plan to be adopted and implemented so that we have success at all levels in combating climate change.

Numerous grants and other funding from the American Rescue Plan, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and state and private funds will be awarded to make communities resilient to climate change and help to mitigate emissions. Having a Climate Action Plan adopted by the county will provide another point of evidence to grantors that we are prepared to spend these funds and can make the most of any awards. These funds will not just benefit our community in terms of climate change, but some can help reduce the energy burden on low income residents, make our streets safer, and lessen the impact of flooding on Prince Georgians.

One small amendment. We would support changing the goals for carbon neutrality by 2050 and the interim goal of 50% by 2030 to more directly correspond to the goals enacted in the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022 (SB 528).¹ This would result in the goals of a final resolution for carbon neutrality by 2045 and an interim goal of 60% by 2031, the former being more important for the County Council to formally adopt since it is state law for the entirety of the state of Maryland to be carbon neutral by that date.

We encourage a FAVORABLE report for this important resolution.

¹ <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2022RS/bills/sb/sb0528E.pdf>